



Getting a Grip on Grants: A How-to Presentation for Park and Recreation Providers

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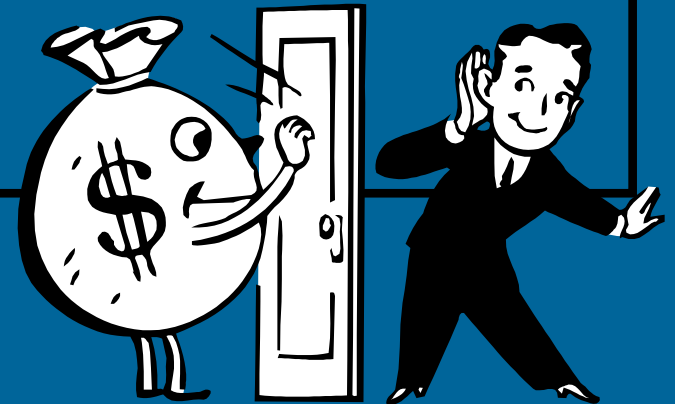
Presentation Objectives:

Participants will learn:

- ✓ Grant writing basics
- ✓ Time-saving research steps
- ✓ How to make your proposal, budget and application more competitive



- ✓ Grant basics
- ✓ Getting organized
- ✓ Grant research
- ✓ Hot topics and how they could work for you



Grant Basics —What are grants?

- ✓ Grants can be...per capita (sometimes called “Block” or “Formula”) competitive, and specified line item.
- ✓ Grants are supplemental funds allowing agencies to provide services, provide new and continuing programs, or to conduct research.

✓ Grants are not randomly distributed

Agencies must apply for them — even if they are a legislative line item.

✓ Providers include:

- Individual giving
- Public and Private Foundations, such as the Packard Foundation
- Corporations, such as Target, Teichert, Raley's-Bel Air
- Charitable organizations such as Lions, Soroptomists, and faith-based
- Governmental (publicly) funded - Federal, state & local

Typically, you have a better chance of getting a grant if:

- ✓ You demonstrate strong partnerships and collaborations*
- ✓ Your match is at or above what is being requested (can be volunteers, in-lieu or cash)
- ✓ You submit a memorable, well-prepared application

* Important note: Funding programs vary

How can grants be used?

→ Can grants be used for capital projects?

Absolutely, many are for acquisition, renovation and development purposes. Many governmental grants can be used to fund capital outlay projects such as trails, park structures and boat launching areas.

→ What about park maintenance?

Generally park maintenance funds are not available through governmental grant sources. You may have better luck finding funding through charitable grant sources.

Types of Foundations

- ✓ Private Foundations
- ✓ Corporate Foundations
- ✓ Operating Foundations
- ✓ Community Foundations

Source: Foundation Directory's web site
(www.fdncenter.org/learn)

Governmental or Public Agency Grants

In the 1960s, the federal government began to use grants aimed at specific categories or problem areas. For example the Land and Water Conservation Fund (1965) provides federal funding for statewide planning and for acquiring and developing outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Public Grant Programs or Governmental Grants

- ✓ Formula or Block Grants
- ✓ Competitive, project, categorical, and research grants
- ✓ Grant Application Guidelines or Request for Proposals (RFP's)

Grant Programs Administered by the Dept. of Parks and Recreation:

- ✓ Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program
- ✓ Habitat Conservation Fund*
- ✓ Land and Water Conservation Fund*
- ✓ National Historical Preservation Fund
- ✓ Off-Highway Fund
- ✓ 2000 Bond Act (Prop. 12)*
- ✓ 2002 Resources Bond Act (Prop. 40)*
- ✓ Recreation Trails Program*

*OGALS may be able to help direct you to the right project officer, 916 653-7423, www.parks.ca.gov,
click on Grants and Bond Acts

Pursuing Grants: Is it Worth It?

- ✓ It takes time and effort to research, write the proposal, prepare staff, and gather necessary documents.
- ✓ If successful, there is the accounting and project management which can be a lot of additional work.

The answer for many grant seekers is *YES!*

First Step: Getting Organized

Ask yourself:

1. Is this a one-time effort based on an immediate need?
2. Do we need to pursue grant funding for long-term projects?

Pursuing Grants - Three Approaches (often done simultaneously)

1. Send out a “Master Proposal” and submit parts or phases to various funders.
2. Narrow your focus based on geographic location, population, types of support and program/project ideas.
3. Locate funding sources available to your agency and identify potential projects for which you will be competitively well-matched.

Grant Research — Well Worth the Time

- Focus attention on researching appropriate funders.
- Speak to colleagues and professional associations
- Contact nonprofit resource centers



Grant Research — Save Valuable Time By Speaking to a Project Officer *FIRST!*

- Do some basic program research first!
- Project officers frequently offer solid advice and direction - by all means, speak to them to get advice!
- Review grant web sites such as the Governor's Office for Innovation in Government, <http://www.iig/>

The Internet — Today's Fundraising Frontier (be sure to *narrow* your search, such as “After-school funding”)

Suggested search engines:

- ✓ **TechSoup** <http://www.techsoup.org>
- ✓ **N-Power** <http://www.npowermichigan.org>
- ✓ **Coyote Communications**
<http://www.coyotecom/tips>
- ✓ **GuideStar** <http://www.guidestar.org> and
<http://www.guidestar.org/news/newsletter>
- ✓ **Network for Good**
<http://www.comsearch.net/usa>

Foundation Centers and Library Resources

More and more grantwriters are looking to foundations to support their projects rather than to public entities:

- ✓ The Foundation Directory (<http://fdncenter.org>)
- ✓ The National Data Book of Foundations
(www.nonprofits.org)
- ✓ The Foundation Grant Index CD-ROM
- ✓ The FC Search CD-ROM database

Grantwriting Services

First, get a lot of help from the granting agency, such as an OGALS project officer.

You may *not* need a grantwriting consultant, but if you do, remember:

- ✓ Paid by the hour, project, or on a retainer fee.
- ✓ The Nonprofit Resource Center has a list of consultants, **916 264-2772** or speak to friends and colleagues for suggestions. (www.nonprofitresourcectr.org)

“Talking to a staff person at the potential funder’s office when preparing the proposal cannot be overemphasized. When you establish a good rapport with this person, s/he will not lead you astray. S/he will help talk you through the worthiness of the project in question and make suggestions for timing and the amount to request.”

Karen Wilson, Executive Director, WildCare

Link Your Project to the Grantor's Purpose

- ✓ Research goals, values and mission of agency. *This will save you lots of time in the long-run.*
- ✓ Document submittal requirements such as deadlines, format and contact names.

Watch for Politically “Hot
Topics” — Often Funding
Follows

1. **Obesity** - costs associated with overweight populations is estimated @ \$117 billion in 2000. Approximately 300,000 US deaths annually.*

Park and recreation providers are absolutely part of the solution!

*Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity.

2. Terrorism & Homeland Security

Knowledgeable park and recreation professionals know they can promote safe and secure park facilities as places for family gathering destinations.

3. At-Risk Youth Mentoring

Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002 promises no earlier than 2007 to increase funding for schools.

As providers of before and afterschool programs, we can potentially apply for these funds.

4. Vanishing Landscapes

Park and recreation professionals recognize the long overdue public investment in open space and can work effectively with land trusts to preserve, protect, and manage these lands.

5. Graying of Californians

- ✓ California has the largest elderly population in the country; 10 percent more than Florida.
- ✓ By 2010, 1 in 5 will be age 60 or over.
- ✓ By 2040, the number is projected to grow by *154 percent*.

As providers of services to this group, we will constantly need to reevaluate program and facility relevancy.

6. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities

Demand will continue to be high for traditional recreational activities and programs, such as walking, beach play, court games and picnicking.

7. Partnerships are no longer an option — they are a “Must Have”

Increasingly grant programs look for volunteers and collaborative efforts while reviewing grant proposals.

Improve your odds by presenting a solid, well-worded connection between your project and your agency's volunteers .

“The best advice I like to give to grant seekers is to keep the grant proposal simple, make it concise, be sure it adheres to the funder’s guidelines and be sure that your proposed project meets the mission and goals of the funding agency.”

Jan Stohr, Executive Director, Nonprofit
Resource Center, Sacramento

Critical Elements of the Grant Proposal and Grant Administration and Implementation

Preparing the Proposal

The proposal explains why a project is being undertaken, what will be accomplished, where it will take place and who or what will benefit or change. It should also state your agency's ability and strengths related to ensuring success.

“Grant proposals are funded when they express the same priorities as the funder. Conversely, grant applications are rejected when they do not closely reflect the goals of the funder.”

Laura Svendsgaard, Grantwriter and
Consultant

A Word to the Wise...

- Look long-range, get one or two small successes under your belt to show credibility before seeking funds for a relatively big project.
- Funders are looking for proposals that demonstrate project readiness, have strong community support and are consistent with long-range planning.

Key Components of your Proposal

- ☐ Cover letter
- ☐ Summary of the proposed project
- ☐ Agency introduction
- ☐ Description of the issue that will be addressed (the needs statement)
- ☐ Program method
- ☐ Evaluation
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Attachments

Writing the Proposal — the Essentials

1. Be positive
2. Assume the reader knows nothing about the subject
3. Be clear in documenting needs
4. Don't overuse professional jargon
5. Follow procedural guidelines
6. Present material systematically

More Essentials...

7. Provide well-explained budget summaries.
8. Your proposal could be used as a model.
9. Proposal should be professional looking.
10. Proposal contains substantive graphics.

Attributes that can make a proposal stronger: *

Collaboration: Has the active support of more than one jurisdiction, agency or organization.

Reaches At-Risk Groups: Provides opportunities for advancement in underserved communities, including areas with low college attendance rates and low income.

Promotes Civic Engagement: Encourages and enables social and civic interaction, especially participation in community decision-making forums.

*Source: Great Valley Center Programs, Legacy Grants, 2004

More Attributes to Strengthen Your Proposal:

Sustainability: Provides accepted measures for assessing effectiveness of the project.

Balance: Provides for economic and environmental balance. Considers the long-term impact of actions.

*Leveraged Funding: Has support (cash, in-kind, volunteer) from various sources.

Capability of Lead Agency: Demonstrates the administrative ability and capacity to carry out the project.

* Depends on funding program.

And Finally:

Diversity: Reaches across cultures and economic status to achieve diverse participation.

Best Practices: Uses proven tools, techniques or technology. Creates a new model for a solution or innovative approach.

Public Policy Value: Provides new information. Responds to a specific need, facilitating a solution to an ongoing problem. Demonstrates or creates public support.

Comments you Never Want to Hear an Evaluator Say:

1. “What the *heck* is this?”
2. “They can do this when?”
3. “I just don’t get it!”
4. “The budget just doesn’t add up.”
5. “What language is this written in, Greek? ”
6. “Where the heck is the CEQA material?”
7. “Explain again why a Cadillac Esplande is needed.”
8. “Whoa, this isn’t even close to what the program funds.”
9. “This package is incomplete. It’s going to score really low!”
- 10.”Ugh! Where do I begin?”

Defining the Need for Funding

- ❑ In this section of the proposal, you'll want to articulate who your beneficiaries are and why your project is necessary.
- ❑ Evaluators often scrutinize this section of your grant proposal carefully looking for discrepancies and how you made a strong case for the need for the project in your community.
- ❑ Demonstrate there is a genuine need for your project.

Articulating your Program Method

This section of your proposal *must* drive home the message that you are highly organized and ready to get moving.

Action! Action! Action!

How to Make your Proposal More Competitive

1. Address grant criteria (directions)
2. Include relevant maps and current photos
3. Include letters of support
4. Identify matching funds
5. Consider multi-use/partnership projects
6. Be innovative!
7. Indicate how your project will be sustained in future years

Importance of Partnerships

Many grant funders, both governmental and private are emphasizing partnerships and collaborative efforts.



Proposals that have the greatest potential are:

- * Clear and well-defined, have a complete scope, and meet the criteria of the grant application.
- * Proposals must have a specific, easily understood “result” and should portray a clear road-map for how the project will be accomplished and how much it will cost.
- * The budget will need to be convincing and be easily understood.

More on Tackling the Budget

- ❑ Identify what your agency and other agencies will contribute.
- ❑ Identify matching funds (cash and in-kind contributions) by reviewing the list of eligible proposal costs.
- ❑ Watch personnel and travel expenses; red flag!
- ❑ Review budget for mathematical errors.

Have you Included Volunteer Time?

- ☐ Prevailing wage differs throughout the State.
- ☐ Check with the granting agency's project officer to find out what is acceptable.

Nuts and Bolts - Getting Help with Several Essential Requirements

- ❑ Documenting your audience

www.census.gov/ and factfinder.census.gov
and www.dof.ca.gov

- ❑ Environmental compliance (CEQA & NEPA) <http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa>

Land Tenure

Evaluators are looking for assurances that land tenure arrangement (fee simple - *you own it*, less than fee simple - *easement*, and long-term lease/MOU) is sufficient for the period of the grant.

For example, OGALS requires that any lease should be non-revocable.

Layout Basics

The ideal proposal format should be easily 'skimmable' and important points emphasized.

The Evaluation Process

Evaluation panels or teams often select projects with a clearly defined purpose that can be accomplished, rather than projects that attempt to address priorities.

Common Reasons *Why* Proposals are Rejected

- * Primary reason is there was simply not enough money to go around.
- * The project did not match the application requirements.
- * Applicant did not follow the guidelines and the need was not adequately addressed.
- * Project or program was not clearly explained.
- * Application lacked credibility.

You Got the Grant, Now What?

Way to go!

The next step is administering the project and grant funds wisely — the really hard part!



More on Grant Record Keeping

- * Each funding agency will tell you what they need for their records.
- * For contract amendments, be sure to get them approved before work occurs and/or costs are incurred.
- * Project reports fill several functions:
 - Accountability and project management
 - Public relations
 - Fundraising

Ten Tips for Staying Ahead of the Grant Record Keeping Process

1. Be honest — report errors as soon as they are discovered.
2. Periodically meet with your project officer — check in to see how things are coming, review project changes and answer questions about timelines.
3. Take lots of notes and photos — when writing your final report, these will come in handy.

4. Thank the Grant Donor
5. Save all News Articles and Press Releases
6. Follow Instructions
7. Keep it Simple
8. Review Project Expenses Each Month
9. Keep in Touch with your funding agency
10. Agency Credibility is Very Important



Accessing Articles and Publications and Other Helpful Material

www.parks.ca.gov, click on Grants and Bond Acts or Planning (gray bar to the right of screen) Planning Division, Park and Recreation Technical Services